

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-35. (Cancelled)

36. (Currently amended) A method for precluding elution of ~~lead and nickel salt~~ from a plumbing device made of a copper alloy that includes a valve and a tube coupling, comprising

washing at least a liquid-contacting part of the plumbing device of a copper alloy containing ~~both lead and nickel salt, or nickel alone~~, with a cleaning fluid incorporating therein nitric acid and hydrochloric acid as an inhibitor under conditions of a temperature and a duration permitting effective removal of ~~both lead and nickel salt, or nickel alone~~,

thereby effectively depriving a surface of the liquid-contacting part of ~~both lead and nickel salt, or nickel alone~~, and causing the hydrochloric acid to form a coating film on the surface of the liquid-contacting part and preclude elution of ~~both lead and nickel salt, or nickel alone~~, from the surface of the liquid-contacting part in the presence of the coating film,

wherein the nitric acid has a concentration c in a range of $0.5 \text{ wt\%} < c < 7 \text{ wt\%}$ and the hydrochloric acid has a concentration d in a range of $0.05 \text{ wt\%} < d < 0.7 \text{ wt\%}$ in the cleaning fluid,

wherein the temperature is set to $10^\circ\text{C} \leq x \leq 50^\circ\text{C}$,

wherein the nickel is nickel salt,

and wherein ~~both lead segregated on the surface of the liquid-contacting part and nickel salt remaining as a residual on the lead, or the nickel salt alone, are is removed with the cleaning fluid.~~

37. (Currently amended) ~~A-The~~ method according to claim 36, wherein the hydrochloric acid as an inhibitor in the cleaning fluid is caused to form a film of Cl^- ions on the surface of the liquid-contacting part.

38. (Cancelled)

39. (Currently amended) ~~A-The~~ method according to claim 36, wherein the temperature is set to $10^{\circ}\text{C} \leq x \leq 50^{\circ}\text{C}$ and the duration is set to 5 minutes $\leq y \leq 30$ minutes, wherein $y = 250/x$ is satisfied, to attain removal of both lead and nickel salt effectively from the surface of the liquid-contacting part.

40. (Currently amended) ~~A-The~~ method according to claim 36, wherein the duration is set to 20 seconds $\leq y \leq 30$ minutes and the temperature is set to $10^{\circ}\text{C} \leq x \leq 50^{\circ}\text{C}$ to attain removal of nickel salt effectively from the surface of the liquid-contacting part.

41-48. (Cancelled)

49. (Currently amended) ~~A-The~~ method according to claim 36, wherein component parts resulting from forging or from forging and subsequent machining are individually subjected to ~~both of a deleading treatment and a nickel salt-removing treatment or to a nickel removing treatment alone~~ and the treated component parts are assembled into a finished product.

50. (Currently amended) ~~A-The~~ method according to claim 36, wherein a finished product formed of a plurality of parts resulting from forging or from forging and subsequent machining is subjected to ~~both of a deleading treatment and a nickel salt-removing treatment or to a nickel removing treatment alone~~.

51. (Currently amended) ~~A-The~~ method according to claim 36, wherein the copper alloy that is subjected to ~~both of a deleading treatment and a nickel salt-removing treatment or to a nickel removing treatment alone~~ is brass or bronze.

52. (Currently amended) ~~A-The~~ method according to claim 36, wherein the plumbing device is a device that has a surface thereof subjected to a plating treatment using a nickel-containing metal.

53. (Currently amended) A plumbing device made of a copper alloy containing ~~both lead and nickel salt, or nickel alone,~~ that includes a valve and a tube coupling, having at least a liquid-contacting part washed with a cleaning fluid incorporating therein nitric acid and hydrochloric acid as an inhibitor under conditions of a temperature and a duration permitting effective removal of ~~both lead and nickel salt, or nickel alone,~~ thereby performing ~~deleading treatment and nickel salt-removing treatment or nickel removing treatment alone~~ and causing the hydrochloric acid to form a coating film on a surface of the liquid-contacting part thereby effectively precluding elution of ~~both lead and nickel salt or elution of nickel alone~~ from the surface of the liquid-contacting part in the presence of the coating film,

wherein the nitric acid has a concentration c in a range of $0.5 \text{ wt\%} < c < 7 \text{ wt\%}$ and the hydrochloric acid has a concentration d in a range of $0.05 \text{ wt\%} < d < 0.7 \text{ wt\%}$ in the cleaning fluid,

wherein the temperature is set to $10^\circ\text{C} \leq x \leq 50^\circ\text{C}$,

wherein the nickel is nickel salt,

and wherein ~~both lead segregated on the surface of the liquid contacting part and nickel salt is remaining as a residual on the lead, or the nickel salt alone,~~ are removed with the cleaning fluid.

54-58. (Cancelled)

59. (Currently amended) ~~A-~~The plumbing device according to claim 53, comprising component parts forged, or forged and subsequently machined, individually subjected to ~~both a deleading treatment and a nickel salt-removing treatment, or a nickel removing treatment,~~ wherein the treated component parts are assembled into a finished product.

60. (Currently amended) ~~A-The~~ plumbing device according to claim 53, further comprising a plurality of parts cast, or cast and subsequently machined, and subjected to ~~both of a deleading treatment and a nickel salt-removing treatment or a nickel removing treatment.~~

61. (Currently amended) ~~A-The~~ plumbing device according to claim 53, wherein the copper alloy treated by ~~both of a deleading treatment and a nickel salt-removing treatment or a nickel removing treatment~~ is brass or bronze.

62. (Currently amended) ~~A-The~~ plumbing device according to claim 61, wherein the brass is a material proofed against elution of zinc.

63. (Currently amended) ~~A-The~~ plumbing device according to claim 53, wherein the plumbing device has a surface thereof plated with a nickel-containing alloy.

64. (Currently amended) ~~A-The~~ method according to claim 36, wherein a cleaning fluid for removing ~~both lead and nickel salt or nickel alone~~ comprising a mixed acid incorporating therein nitric acid as a cleaning fluid and hydrochloric acid as inhibitor is used, thus precluding elution of ~~both lead and nickel salt~~ from the plumbing device.

65-73. (Cancelled)